

tack" at Greeley, and at Fort Collins, then only colonies. Today they have three churches there, one with 333 members, one with seventy-five, and one with over six hundred. A little further South, they found another stream, coming out of the mountains. Two tacks went into the map, and today one of them represents a church of 170 members and the other of 330. At Boulder they started an effort, and today that church reports a thousand members.

On the North side of Pike's Peak is the Ute Pass, which leads up into the interior mountains and parks of Colorado, such as Manitou, the Garden of the gods, the Cheyenne Canon, etc. In October, 1870, Mr. Gage preached the first sermon at Manitou and the first sermon at Colorado Springs. The latter now has fourteen hundred members and several offshoots.

Mr. Gage continues to tell—but we let him tell his own story:

The presbytery directed Mr. Jackson and myself to organize a church at Canon City as soon as we saw the way open. We drove all one night from Colorado Springs, some fifty miles, sleeping and driving by turns, and came to Canon City, where the Arkansas river breaks from the mountains. There was an abundance of water and a sheltered valley, and the best coal, and subsequently the richest gold mines—then undiscovered—in the State. We saw from these conditions that a town of importance was bound to come. There was already a small village of one short street in existence. There was no railroad nearer than fifty miles, and a more forlorn place I never saw.

But the conditions, in spite of appearances, made a town inevitable. We organized with a small membership, and today the Presbyterian Church of Canon City reports eight hundred and eighty-two members, and nearly one thousand in its Sabbath-school. In those early days "Helen Hunt" wrote, "You never know how bored you are till you get out of Canon City." But now it is one of the prettiest, most prosperous and best towns in all the United States.

Already, in 1870, there was a small town at Pueblo, a place where a town of importance had to be. The configuration of the country required a town just there, and nowhere else. So Mr. Jackson organized a church in Pueblo with five members. Two of them lived in the village, and one ten miles, and two others twenty miles in the country. But that organization held the place for our church as population came, as it did and must; so that today we have five, possibly six Presbyterian churches, with the old First Church, of which I had the pleasure to be pastor for seven years, counting over five hundred members.

What Sheldon Jackson did for the West, Josephus Johnson and his fellow laborers were doing in Texas. Just such work is being done today by our Church in Oklahoma. And the vast territories of New Mexico are now looking to us for like Home Mission ministries.

This work has been placed by our Assembly under the care of the Committee of Home Missions, of which Dr. S. L. Morris is secretary. The Assembly has asked our people to gather during the month of January the money that is needed to prosecute this work on our borders. We will do it.

Let us remember that the work in Colorado did not yield its large fruitage in its first few years. But the fact that the Presbyterian Church was the first to begin work in the Rocky Mountains explains the fact that today it is the leading denomination in that part of the country.

## USING THE RULING ELDERS.

The venerable Synod of Mississippi did a most wise and practical thing when it lately took steps looking towards the utilization of that great force of the Church which lies in the ruling eldership. Realizing that the ruling elders can not well be sent out to conduct meetings or supply vacant churches, it recommends that they be more used in the churches which have pastors, so that these pastors may be temporarily released for evangelistic work or to care for unsupplied fields.

The ruling elder is not a "layman," or a "lay member" of the church. He is an official of the highest type, the equal in authority, in every church court, of the ordained minister. His office gives the very title of our Church, a Church governed by "presbyters." His vow at ordination pledges him to a work which the "layman" can not perform. His duties, as defined in the standards to which he has given solemn subscription, are of the highest spiritual type, differing very slightly from those of the other elder who labors also "in word and doctrine." Upon him as much as upon the minister, depends the peace, unity, purity and progress of the church. By the nature of his office, its duties, his vows, the expectation of the Church and the call of Christ, he is not a "layman."

Ruling elders should watch diligently over the flock committed to their care, visit the people at their homes, instruct the ignorant, comfort the mourner, pray with and for the people, order collections for pious uses, take the oversight of singing, assemble the people for worship when there is no minister—these are some of the duties which are laid upon them, which they agree at ordination to perform, and in the performance of which they may expect the rich reward which God has promised. Every one of them gives the ruling elder a dignity and honor, in its faithful discharge, which lift him into an exalted place before the world and in the Church of God. And with the dignity and honor come both a responsibility and a promise. God will help him just in proportion to the difficulty and exaltation of the place if he enters upon his duties with humble trust and resolution.

The splendid manhood and gifts which are to be found in the ruling eldership of our churches, not in Mississippi only, but throughout our Zion, might be used in keeping the work of the settled churches going while their pastors are given a little time for outside work, to go into "the regions beyond", which are not so very far "beyond" after all. And the membership of our churches should be taught to look upon these consecrated efforts of the ruling elders as but a happy part of the wise provision which God has made for the greater progress of his Church. The people will soon learn to appreciate this eldership work and to rejoice in it as God's means for building his Church. They will soon feel all the more the duty upon them to wait upon the Lord in the services conducted by these brethren, and their hearts will glow, and their elders' hearts with them, when the glad tidings are brought of the results of the more widely extended ministry of the pastors whom they have released for a time to this larger work.